24. Educational Condition of the Ezhava Community.

MR. KUNJUKRISHNAN VAIDYAN (*Member, Nominated*) said that the Ezhava community forming 17·5 per cent. of the total population of the State and numerically as strong as the Nayars was educationally in a very backward condition in spite of its comparatively favourable economic condition due to the pursuit of agriculture and industries. Compared with other communities such as Brahmins, Nayars, Ampalavasis and Kaniyans, the percentage of literacy among Ezhavas was, as disclosed by the latest Census Report, very low. In regard to knowledge of English, the condition was even more deplorable. The number of Ezhava boys attending English Schools was not sufficiently high. One reason for the educational backwardness of the community was the fact of most of the educational institutions in the State having been inaccessible to them till a few years back. During the last decade the progress made by the community in the matter of literacy was lower than the average for the whole State. The poverty of the community was to a large extent responsible for more pupils not going in for higher education in English. Their comparative poverty would be evident from the paucity of voters from them for the Legislative Council. Government should therefore grant special fee concessions to pupils belonging to the community. The member had no objection to the benefit of such concessions being denied to children belonging to rich families. Fee concessions, granted generally to all members of the community as a result of repeated representations at successive sessions of the Assembly, had been reduced in scope as a result of certain discussions in the Legislative Council. Government should reconsider the whole question and extend the operation of the scheme.

The member also urged the need for greater representation of the community in the public service and on non-official public bodies.

DEWAN : The figures quoted by the member themselves show that literacy among Ezhavas in the vernacular is about 22 per cent. The strength of Ezhava students in all classes and grades of educational institutions is also increasing year after year. The difference in the number of students between the years 1098 and 1099 is 6,000. There is a similar increase from the year 1097 to 1098 also. In regard to vernacular education, there does not therefore seem to be any justification for extending any special concession to Ezhavas.

In regard to English education, no doubt the percentage of literacy among Ezhavas is less than one. That is why the Government have introduced a scheme of fee concessions there. The member imagines that this fee concession has been stopped. That is not the case. The benefit has been withheld only in the case of boys whose parents can afford to pay school fees ; and I believe a large number of Ezhava pupils are in receipt of this fee concession. The member himself agrees that he does not want the children of rich parents to be helped by any fee concession. There is no difference then between what he wants and what the Government have done. Government will be glad if the community will show further improvement in English and Vernacular education.

The House adjourned for lunch at 2-2 P. M. to meet again at 3 P. M.

25. Needs of the Nagercoil Municipality.

MR. V. S. RAMASWAMI (*Member, Municipal Council, Nagercoil*) requested that the weaving school at Nagercoil might be transferred to the control of the Municipality with a view to secure its more efficient administration. The axles, etc., reported to be kept for sale in the institution were not available ; sometimes *vizhutu* alone was available ; and if at any time both axle and *vizhutu* happened to be available, the Superintendent could not sell them as he had no instructions about the price fixed. It was to remedy the difficulties of weavers in getting those accessories from Bombay that the present arrangement had been sanctioned. The rent of the building in which the school was held was much too high ; a smaller building would amply suffice for the small class of five or six apprentices. The building itself, a tiled one and consequently hot inside, was unsuitable for a weaving factory. The establishment charges too were inordinately high and the present staff could well be reduced to

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some extent. The member did not blame the Government whose intentions were good, but the officers who were responsible. The Superintendent was ignorant of Tamil and spoke English which neither the pupils nor the local weavers among whom he worked could understand. The warping machine, purchased at a cost of Rs. 1,500, had been rendered useless. The board of management, which once existed, should be revived. The Municipality would take up the school with a 50 or 75 per cent. maintenance grant. The Municipal Council contained a strong element of weavers.

The member wanted that all the primary schools in the municipal area should be transferred to the management of the Council, together with the entire funds now spent on them, as the Council had not adequate funds.

The member next prayed that the toddy and arrack shops in the municipal area might be removed elsewhere. He based his request on the insanitary condition of such shops.

The town of Nagercoil should be resurveyed, as the people now legitimately complained if proceedings were taken against them under the Land Conservancy Regulation for encroachments which were not real. Encroachment cases should be taken only after the resurvey. All *poramboke* lands within municipal limits, such as roads, now under the control of the Revenue Department and the P. W. Department should be handed over to the Municipality.

The Dewan, after inspection, had ordered the demolition of a portion of the tobacco bankshall buildings, situated in a congested part of the town. The Excise Commissioner had, however, recommended the retention of the building. The matter should soon be finally disposed of by the Government so that the road at the place might be widened.

Government should contribute at least a portion, if not the whole, of the cost of acquiring the Andipappankulam.

The member considered the rates now fixed for pensionary contribution to be unnecessarily high. It would be an advantage if the payments made by the Council in the past on that account, which would amount to roughly Rs. 25,000, could be returned to the Municipality, which was short of funds and was obliged to borrow money. The fund might be transferred to the Council at least for a time.

The *satram* at Oluganasseri was now under the control of the Land Revenue Department. The Municipality had, on a reference from the Government, agreed to take it under its supervision. The transfer to the Municipality should be ordered at once, as the town stood always in danger of infection from unclaimed dead bodies found in the *satram*.

The member finally prayed for the appointment of a qualified lady doctor in the local hospital or the establishment of a women's hospital. The Baby Week celebrations had opened the eyes of people to the importance of maternity and child welfare work.

DEWAN: The first matter referred to was the weaving school at Nagercoil. I am very sorry to hear from you that that school is not properly worked. The Director of Industries is not present here just now. If he were here, I would perhaps have been in a position to give you a definite reply on the point. You say that loom accessories are not regularly stored and sold properly in the institution. You also say that the Superintendent is not able to speak Tamil and that he talks only in English. If what you say is true, it is really regrettable. The Director will be asked to enquire into these things and submit a report. You also point out that a sum of Rs. 50 is paid as rent for the building in which the institution is located and that it is too high. Further, you do not consider the building, which is a tiled one, as suitable for weaving purposes and say that a more suitable building can be had on a cheaper rent. If so, Government have no objection to locate the school in such a building. The matter will be considered when the term of the present lease expires.

As regards your statement that the establishment charges are too much, I may say that very recently the Director recommended the appointment of an assistant. Though the Government refused it at first, the recommendation had to be sanctioned

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as it was again repeated by the Director. If, as you say, the establishment is too much, Government will of course consider whether there is any possibility of reducing it.

You next referred to the board of visitors and said that two years ago the board worked and that subsequently it was discontinued. That matter has not been brought to the notice of the Government by the Director. Government will enquire.

In regard to the other defects pointed out by you, a report will be called for from the Director and the needful will be done.

Your next request is that the primary schools within the municipal area, along with the sum now spent on them, may be handed over to the Municipality. If the Municipality passes a resolution on the subject and sends up the same to Government, the matter will be considered.

With regard to the removal of the arrack and toddy shops within municipal limits, there may be difficulties. The Excise Committee, which was composed of officials and non-officials, has sent in its report, and that report will be published for public criticism. One of its proposals, I believe, is to give local option to the Municipalities. There will be advisory committees in municipal towns; and the Municipal Council will have to act according to the opinion of the committee in regard to this matter. The report, as I said, will be published and orders will be passed early after receipt of the criticisms.

In regard to the encroachment cases in the town of Nagercoil, I understand that the minor circuits were surveyed in 1098.

MEMBER: People do not know that. If an examination is made now of every house, it will be found that the survey is full of mistakes. As it is, whenever a *Proverticar* or an Accountant wants to do it, he comes and surveys without orders from the Government and fixes a stone where he likes.

DEWAN: It must agree with the records.

MEMBER: The Municipality is prepared to pay half the cost of the survey.

DEWAN: As I said in reply to the Shencottah member yesterday, a cadastral survey of the town would be very expensive. One square mile would cost something like Rs. 65,000. That is the difficulty. Street survey may be done and it is less costly. The Municipality should consider the question and pass a resolution offering to pay a portion at least of the cost and send up the same to Government. I shall ask for an estimate being prepared.

MEMBER: Street survey will be sufficient.

DEWAN: Even that is not very easy. The survey of adjoining properties may be necessary in some cases. Compared to cadastral survey, street survey is less costly.

The transfer to the Municipality of the lanes, roads, etc., that are now under the control of the Revenue Department is a general question which has to be examined at some length. In most cases they would have to be handed over, because the Municipality looks after sanitation and the Municipality will also have to see that no encroachments are made. But, some streets and roads will, for some reason or other, continue to be in the hands of Government. Except these latter, all the other lanes and roads should, I think, be handed over to the Municipality. But, as I said, it is a general question and has therefore to be examined more carefully.

As regards the tobacco bankshall buildings, I may say, that the demolition of the same was considered necessary by me. But the Excise Commissioner has objected to this. The Chief Engineer's report on the subject is awaited.

With regard to the acquisition of Andipappankulam, it is not possible for the Government to contribute money. If the Government take up the responsibility to pay money in such cases, they will be landed in difficulties. To the Shencottah Municipality about Rs. 30,000 have been given as loan for acquiring the Perumalkulam tank. So, in the case of this tank also, Government may be prepared to advance a loan. They cannot incur the cost themselves.

MEMBER: At least half.

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DEWAN : Even that cannot be granted.

As regards pensionary contribution, you said that only Rs. 5 or Rs. 6 is granted as pension, while the Municipality has contributed a sum of Rs. 25,000 or Rs. 30,000. so far to the coffers of Government. I wonder whether your figures are correct. Even granting that the figures given by you are correct, it has to be remembered that, if to-day the pension is small, to-morrow it may be high. The rule on the point is that, if pension is to be given from the Government, a contribution from the Municipality is necessary. That is the rule everywhere. You may establish a provident fund, the Municipality contributing a portion and the staff another portion from their pay and on retirement you may give a consolidated sum to the employee. In any case the amount contributed cannot be given back to the Municipality.

As regards the *satram* at Oluganasseri, I do not think that there is any objection to handing it over to the Municipality. I think there is some correspondence on the subject and I shall look into the matter. The *satram* at Alleppey has been transferred to the control of the local Municipal Council.

As regards the appointment of a lady doctor, the intention of the Government is to appoint a lady doctor in every large hospital in a municipal town. We have a lady doctor at Quilon where there is a separate women's hospital. In Kottayam and Alleppey, we have appointed lady doctors. We are expecting the return of our stipendiary students within a period of five or six months. As soon as they return, more lady doctors will be appointed.

26. Needs of Shencottah.

MR. PULIKKANNU TALAVANAR (*Member, Municipal Council, Shencottah*) prayed that steps be taken to remove the increasing congestion in the town by the opening of lanes which would also tend to make scavenging more efficient. As the town is mostly surrounded by wet lands, the possibilities of expansion are limited. The plot of dry land near the P. W. D. office should be reserved as a house site as resolved by the Municipal Council. The funds at the disposal of the Council amounted only to Rs. 3,000 while the demands on it in the matter of sanitation, drainage, improvement and maintenance of roads, etc., were great. The smaller roads should be improved and handed over to the control of the Municipality, together with the funds required for their maintenance. Drains had to be constructed on either side of the Quilon-Shencottah road within the town limits. The town was subject to frequent outbreaks of epidemics owing to impure water supply. The need for the supply of good drinking water for the town had been urged at the last session of the Assembly also. A new bridge should be constructed in place of the Suppanchetti bridge which was in a damaged and dangerous condition. The bridge across the Kundar river also required to be repaired and widened. An area of at least 50 cents from the extensive premises of the local taluk office should be granted to the Municipal Council for the construction of the municipal office.

DEWAN: As regards the opening of roads, the Municipality should see what roads are necessary, whether new roads have to be constructed, which of the existing roads should be broadened, what expenditure will have to be incurred, how much money can be raised locally, and all that. Then, the Council should pass a resolution in the matter and send up the same to Government separately in each case and the matter will be considered by the Government. The Government are prepared to advance loans for such purposes.

In the case of the Perumalkulam tank, owing to a civil suit which is pending in the High Court, and on account of an injunction order issued in that case, nothing can be done until the suit is decided.

You next say that the roads and streets within the municipal area should be handed over to the Municipality. That is the opinion of the Government also. The Shencottah Municipality was asked, some time ago, whether it could take over all the minor roads within its jurisdiction. But the Council was not agreeable to the proposal.

MEMBER: The municipal fund is insufficient.

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